

***Bill would forgive education loans for certain energy workers***

WASHINGTON, DC - Rep. Charlie Wilson (OH-6) today introduced the Energy Education Loan Forgiveness Act of 2010. This legislation would provide loan forgiveness to skilled energy workers in an advanced energy industry.

The United States is facing a critical shortage of trained professionals for jobs that focus on energy efficiency. According to the National Commission on Energy Policy, "there will be substantial overall demand for technically educated students, skilled craft electric power and construction workers; and math, science, and engineering professionals." However, one of the main challenges to training the future energy workforce is the cost of education.

"We need more workers, but we have to educate them properly, and the cost of such an education is a major obstacle for many," Wilson said this morning on the floor of the House as he introduced his bill. "My legislation would help ease this burden by establishing a student loan forgiveness program for energy students who go on to work in the advance energy field."

The program would start at \$2,000 in forgiveness the first year and incrementally increase up to \$5,000 in five years.

"If we want our country to lead the way in advanced energy technologies, we have to be willing to invest in that workforce through education," Wilson said.

The bill will now be referred to the appropriate committees for consideration.